

FISHES AND FISHING

Drop a Line

By LINDY BLAISDELL



Brett Blaisdell with 5 good-sized pickerel.

We are officially into summer. School is out and summer vacationers will be gathering here in Duxbury to fish. The majority will fish in Duxbury Bay, however, some will fish offshore in the ocean, better known as Cape Cod Bay. Hoping to keep these vacationers and also the locals from a lost summer and a trip to court let's review the latest salt water fishing regulations.

We all know by now that the striper legal keeper length is at 28 inches, with one keeper per day. You can catch all you want as long as you practice catch and release. Bluefish, the 2nd most sought after game fish has no size limit, but 10 are all you can bring home per day.

All daily bag limits are per fisherman. Two bluefishermen can take 20 blues; 3 striper fishermen can bring in 3 stripers, etc.

Not too many of us small boat fishermen go after cod and haddock, but those that do shouldn't bring home any under 21 inches or more than 10 in combination each. If you get lucky and catch a pollock make sure it measures at least 19 inches before returning to the dock. Those tasty little scups need to be 9 inches. Tautog have to be 16 inches and cut that in half, 8 is the daily limit. Those hot weather fluke need to exceed 14 inches, but at that size the daily limit of 8 is more than enough for a meal. Just don't catch them before May 15 or after Aug. 31. Winter flounder, although caught throughout the summer, have to be 12 inches and your limit is 10. Winter flounder season runs from May 1 through the following year to Feb. 28.

If you are into bill fishing, you can catch one each of 86 inch blue marlin, a 57 inch sailfish or a 62 inch white marlin.

It's hard to imagine that eels would be a concern of the fisheries conservation, yet they are. Young eels or elvers are in demand in the Orient. Overseas demand has a \$350 per pound price tag on the little eels and a market resale value of \$1200 per pound. The market value for bait when sold to striper fishermen is only a couple dollars each. A market along with the New York Holiday market that would never harm the eel population.

Massachusetts has a 4 inch limit on eels, however, other states like New Jersey don't and 16,000 pounds or 42 million elvers were harvested there last season. It will not take long for those continued harvesting numbers to have an impact on the general eel population. An eel only spawns once, then, like a west coast salmon, dies.

Trout fishermen wishing to extend their season should try Gull Pond in Wellfleet. With over 100 acres of water and depths to 60 feet, gull is a good carryover pond. Nice rainbow and brown trout are still being caught from the landing, off Gull Pond Road from Rt. 6, where anglers can cast into 20 feet of water.

If you can't make it to Wellfleet by 5:30 am when the trout are in close to shore, try tolling the North and Southeast sections. Worms and Power Bait are still good from shore while minnow-like plugs fished deep work from a boat.

Gull Pond was at one time one of the best smallmouth ponds on the Cape. The bass are back. If the trout fishing is slow, try casting a jig and porkrind into 15 to 20 feet of water. There is an under water hump, 10 feet down in the southeastern corner.

If you plan to visit or vacation on the Cape this summer and would like to go fishing, give me a call for further information.